Manufacture of UAVs

264. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Rs. 500 crore project has been launched for the indigenous manufacture of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) or spy drones which, reportedly, entails active collaboration between the Bangalore-based Aeronautical Development Establishment and the Israel Aircraft Industries, to boost the surveillance and precision strike capabilities of the armed forces; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and its present status?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) No, Sir. DRDO is developing a road map to meet future requirements of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles for the Services in partnership with the Indian industries.

Indo-Sri Lanka defence dialogue

† 265. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a dialogue for co-operation in the field of defence is in process between India and Sri Lanka;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the agreement in the field of defence between both the countries is likely to be finalised?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) There is no institutionalized dialogue for defence cooperation. However, Defence cooperation with Sri Lanka is conducted through the Indian High Commission in Colombo and exchanges of high-level visits, as part of Indo-Sri Lanka overall bilateral relations.

(c) Defence cooperation between India and Sri Lanka has been mainly in the area of training for Sri Lankan defence personnel in Indian defence training institutions, flood and Tsunami related relief assistance, high-level

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

defence and military related visits, ship visits and joint or coordinated maritime patrolling in common or contiguous waters, and occasional material assistance.

(c) A Defence Cooperation Agreement proposed by Sri Lanka has been under the consideration of the Government. No decision on its conclusion and signature has been taken by the Government as yet.

World record by Indian pilots

† 266. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state.

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian pilots participating in the recent Indo-French joint *air* exercise have set a world record during India-Paris flight;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) in what way Government are considering to honour the pilots for setting the record?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The Indian Air Force fighters and air to air refueling aircraft participated in the joint Indo-French air exercise from 15th to 30th June, 2005. However, no world record was established during the India-Paris flight.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Agreement on US-India defence relationship

267. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the agreement signed on the US-India defence relationship during June, 2005 consist co-production of defence equipment and clauses to collaborate in multinational operations;

(b) if so, whether there is any commitment on lifting the curbs on supply of high technology to India;

(c) if so, whether the above agreement will lead to open market for US weaponry to India;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.